

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 MCT-01 AID-05 PC-01 /073 W

-----040451Z 047222 /22

R 020905Z APR 77

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4439

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0274

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ET

SUBJECT: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

REF: ASMARA 0160 (DTG 280945Z FEB 77)

1. INSURGENT GUNMEN ASSASSINATED ANOTHER PROMINENT KEBELE LEADER ON THE EVENING OF MARCH 29 (REFTEL). HE WAS ALLEGED BY THE REBELS TO HAVE BEEN TOO VOCAL IN HIS SUPPORT OF THE EPMG AND TOO RIGID IN THE CONDUCT OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RATIONING. AS IS NORMALLY THE CASE, THE VICTIM WAS GIVEN THREE WARNINGS TO DESIST HIS ALLEGED ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO THE ASSASSINATION.

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2. THERE ARE RUMORS THAT CERTAIN KEBELE LEADERS WILL REQUEST THE EPMG TO PROVIDE THEM ARMS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM INSURGENT ASSASSINS, THE SOURCE OF THESE RUMORS APPEARS TO BE THE LOCAL ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES, AS IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT ANY KEBELE OFFICIAL MAKING SUCH A REQUEST IS INVITING IMMEDIATE EXECUTION BY INSURGENTS.

3. AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORT THAT THE SECOND DIVISION WIVES ASSOCIATION HELD A MASSIVE DEMONSTRATION ON MARCH 30 IN SUPPORT OF THE EPMG REVEALS THAT THE STORY IS LARGELY HYPERBOLE. AS THERE WAS NO SUCH DEMONSTRATION AT ANY PUBLIC LOCATION IN THE CITY, IT IS SURMISED THAT IT WAS HELD AT SECOND DIVISION HQ. IT IS REPORTED THAT THE WIVES WERE PROMPTED TO DEMONSTRATE AS A QUID PRO QUO FOR RECENT FINANCIAL BENEFITS ACCORDED TO THEM IN THE MID-MARCH AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DIRG AND THE SECOND DIVISION TROOPS WHICH ENDED THE DISSIDENCE WITHIN THE MILITARY. THE HERALD REPORT WAS ALSO IN ERROR IN IDENTIFYING THE PRESIDING OFFICER AS ALEMAYEHU DESTA, WHO IS CO OF THE SECOND DIVISION, AS HE IS REPORTEDLY STILL IN GERMANY UNDERGOING MEDICAL TREATMENT. THE PRESIDING OFFICER WAS MOST PROBABLY THE DEPUTY CO, MULATU NEGASH.

4. EPMG SECURITY OFFICIALS INITIATED A CAMPAIGN THIS WEEK TO CONFISCATE VEHICLES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN REGISTERED FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS. THEY APPARENTLY SUSPECT THAT MANY OF THEM BELONG TO ERITREANS WHO HAVE FLED INTO INSURGENT-HELD AREAS, AND THAT SOME ARE BEING USED ON OCCASION BY THE REBELS. THE VEHICLES, MOSTLY CARS AND LAND ROVERS, ARE BEING SECURED IN MILITARY COMPOUNDS. IT IS EXPECTED THAT THEY WILL BE AUCTIONED OFF ONCE IT IS DETERMINED THAT THE RIGHTFUL OWNERS HAVE NOT COME FORWARD. WAUCHOPE

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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